

ROBERT SCHWARTZ
461 Fairview Place
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219
(513) 421-0055
Day Phone (513) 338-1914
robertschwartzcincy@gmail.com

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December 21, 2015

Hon. David Mann
City Hall, Suite 356
801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Hon. Yvette Simpson
City Hall, Suite 349
801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Hon. Kevin Flynn
City Hall, Suite 348
801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Hon. Chris Seelbach
City Hall, Suite 350
801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Hon. P.G. Sittenfeld
City Hall, Suite 354
801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Hon. Charlie Winburn
City Hall, Suite 351
801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Hon. Wendell Young
City Hall, Suite 352
801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Letter to All Counsel Members

Re: Central Parkway Bike Lanes

Honorable Counsel,

It is time to scrap the bike lanes on Central Parkway.

Let us face it, that project just turned out to be embarrassingly awful.

Reasons:

1. There are less than anticipated bikes in the bike lane, even in good weather. One seldom's sees a single biker. Any advantage to bikers is minimal.
2. Any bikers that do use the lane are in jeopardy having to deal with the increased danger of more confined and heavy traffic. Numerous accidents have taken place. It is not providing motorists or the bikers with any advantage or safety. In fact, it places both of them in critical jeopardy.
3. Central Parkway used to have a parking lane in each direction, and two travel lanes in each direction. It is now more convoluted and restricted. In some areas it is limited to one travel lane in each direction and there is no parking at many locations.
4. The number of lanes change as one travels Central Parkway. It is not a consistent path for bicycles or motor vehicles.
5. Bicyclists are left with a false impression that they have protection from the motor vehicle traffic, which may cause them to reduce their responsible observation for their own safety.
6. There are buses on that Parkway, frequently making stops and turns, further compounding traffic.
7. Cars park on what appears to be in the middle of the street awaiting a rear end collision.
8. Unsuspecting motorists will impatiently and angrily wait behind those parked cars, then dangerously pull out into the path of other vehicles.
9. The writing on the pavement of the lanes stating that cars are parked in the lane is a poor Band-Aid attempt to avoid rear end collisions or unnecessary behind-parked-car delays. The signs written in the street lane are unusual, an insufficient answer, and ridiculous.

10. Cars park in the middle of the street lanes and against the curb even when the signs prohibit the parking. This may be due to the unusual and confusing parking signs that are hard to read from any area of the street. These signs with parking/no-parking instructions compound the dangerous conditions.
11. The white plastic poles that protrude from the street are being damaged and knocked down routinely. They remain an ugly blight upon what used to be a very picturesque street for Cincinnati.
12. Motor vehicles that make a right or left turn from or onto the Parkway, must cross a bike lane and avoid unexpected white tubes, new concrete curbs and confusing green painted areas on the pavement. None of this really protects any biker and is an ordeal to a motorist.
13. Businesses, such as Family Dollar, have restricted vehicle entry. Other business along the location have been robbed of parking for their business customers.
14. The location of the Federal Order of Police building (1900 Central Parkway), and other areas along the Parkway, suddenly restrict traffic to one lane in each direction. That mile long area is probably the most dangerous of the whole stretch of Central Parkway. Many park in front of that building at any time with impunity.
15. Central Parkway was always heavily traveled. It was already dangerous with many, speeding cars and lane changes. There have been numerous reported traffic collisions. It is now precariously more dangerous, and life-threatening.

December 10, 2013, Judge Patrick Dinkelacker, a noted Common Pleas Judge, then on the Court of Appeals, is reported to have swerved from his southeast lane of travel on the Central Parkway, crossed the yellow lines and collided against the body of Pamela Barnett, who was standing on the double yellow lines waiting to cross Central Parkway between Ravine and Mohawk. She was killed after being hit by Judge Dinkelacker and thrown in front of and run over by another vehicle. This was before the bike lanes. Now, with the confusing distractions in that area, such mishaps are more likely to occur.

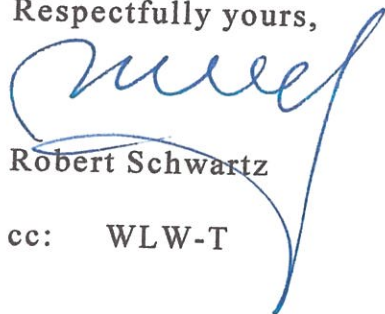
16. The entire system of the lanes looks temporary and more like a construction experiment than a permanent Parkway improvement. The street is not the nice looking Parkway that it once was. Nor is it effective for the bikers and the motorists. Citizens, as well as visitors to the City, do not see a beautiful Parkway. They are confused, placed in danger, and frustrated by the condition of the unsightly mess.

A copy of this letter is going to WLW-T which has admirably and conscientiously maintained a review of the situation. They must have an enormous file. I worry that one day there will be a serious fatal calamity. Then, Channel 5 will dig out former broadcasts, this letter and numerous other letters of complaint and warnings in order to cast blame wherever it may properly be.

There are alternatives. There can be a marked curb area as bike lane to be cautiously shared with motor vehicles. There may be signs that permit bicycle riding on the sidewalks. Bikes may be totally prohibited from Central Parkway as a matter of safety for all concerned, like the prohibition of bikes on expressways. It is probably best to scrap the lanes for bikes and do nothing more. There were bikes before, sharing those lanes with vehicles, with no spacial lanes of attempted accommodation. Bikers would then have a more conscious concern for their own safety than what they may now think provides them with unrealistic protection, lowering their guard.

It is time to scrap the bike lanes and restore Central Parkway to what it was.

Respectfully yours,



Robert Schwartz

cc: WLW-T